Engineering goods	1729.30	1465.31	-15.27
Electronics goods	352.83	232.19	-34.19
Project goods	39.93	13.79	-65.46
Textiles	3560.01	3291.34	-7.55
Handicrafts	226.89	250.66	-10.47
Carpets	234.32	159.50	-31.93
Cotton raw	154.97	25.08	-83.81
Petroleum products	196.99	70.30	-64.31
Unclassifed exports	146.78	799.77	444.87
Grand total	13770.98	13498.29	-1.98

(c) The exports were affected due to a general slow down in world trade, recession in many countries in South East Asia, Japan and Germany, domestic supply constraints in some sectors such as agricultural commodities, and barriers faced in markets of European Union (EU).

(d) A number of steps have been taken to promote exports which include lowering of interest rates on export credit, reduction in transaction cost through decentralisation and simplification of procedures and various other measures as enumerated in the Exim Policy. Steps have also been taken to promote exports through multilateral and bilateral initiatives, identification of thrust sectors and focus regions. A Cabinet Committee on Foreign Trade has also been set up to review the export performance.

Decline in Exports

31. SHRI SITARAM KESRI: Will the Minister COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that there has been considerable decline in India's exports to other countries;

(b) if so, the extent of decline during the last six months and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the balance of trade position as on date?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) As per the provisional data received from the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (DGCI&S), the exports during April-September, 1998-99 in rupee terms and in US$ terms are as given below:

Year	US $ Million	% growth	Ruppee Crores	% growth
Apr.-Sept. 97-98	16821	4.22	60423	6.38
Apr. Sept. 98-99	16270	-3.28	67834	12.26

The exports were affected due to a general slow down in world trade, recession in many countries in South East Asia, Japan and Germany, domestic supply constraints in some sectors such as agricultural commodities, and barriers faced in markets of European Union (EU).

(c) The trade deficit during April-September, 1998-99 was US $ 4990.94 million and Rs. 20808.76 crores.

Trade Talks with Pakistan

32. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Secretary level talks were held with Pakistan in the second week of Nov., 1998 to boost trade between the two countries;

(b) if so, the details of the talks held; and

(c) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) The delegations of India and Pakistan exchanged ideas on issues affecting bilateral trade. A series of steps aimed at enhancing the scope of cooperation were discussed. The Indian delegation inter-alia pointed out that while India has already accorded Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to Pakistan since the 1970s, Pakistan is yet to grant similar status to India in accordance with its obligation under GATT/WTO. The Pakistan delegation responded that they would fulfil their obligation in "due course". During the discussions, it was agreed that the technical teams on Railways and Power from India and Pakistan would meet for detailed discussions in these areas. Both sides agreed to have regular consultations on issues relating to social clause, environment etc. to have common approach.